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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABIDJAN 000991

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KINSHASA PASS TO BRAZZAVILLE

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [IV](#)
SUBJECT: COTE D'IVOIRE: UPCOMING SUMMITS IN YAMOUSSOUKRO
AND NEW YORK

Classified By: POL/ECON Jim Wojtasiewicz, reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) Summary. So far President Gbagbo is saying he will not attend the Secretary General's September 20 mini-summit on Cote d'Ivoire in New York, but he might change his mind under pressure from the Secretary General and his African counterparts. Prime Minister Banny and all the opposition leaders will attend. The five principal Ivoirian leaders will first meet among themselves here in Yamoussoukro September 4. We do not expect much decision-making to come from either meeting. The Yamoussoukro meeting will likely reach no consensus on power-sharing after October, and the Ivoirians will take their poles-apart positions to New York. Gbagbo, or his representative, will continue to insist that he needs no international mandate to extend his own term in office as is, while the opposition will counter that the international community must remove him immediately. In New York, the international community will likely have little appetite to intervene here any more directly than it has already. Instead, the meeting will likely task ECOWAS and the AU with figuring out what to do about the sorry state of the Ivoirian peace process, as happened last year. At the end of the day, the Security Council will probably be asked to endorse essentially a rollover of the current arrangements. This does not bode well for the prospect of getting to elections even by October 2007. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Mariama Bayard-Gamatie, Political Director at ONUCI (the UN Operation in Cote d'Ivoire), told us August 30 that President Gbagbo has not yet responded to the Secretary General's invitation to attend the September 20 mini-summit on Cote d'Ivoire in New York on the margins of the General Assembly. Gbagbo's press spokesman Desire Tagro told us September 1 that President Gbagbo will probably not go, but will likely send Laurent Fologo, President of the Economic and Social Council, to represent him. Tagro noted that Gbagbo had told Secretary General Annan July 5 when Annan first proposed this meeting that he didn't understand the purpose of it and did not want to attend. Tagro said that Gbagbo intended, in his response to Annan's letter of invitation, to reiterate his view that the Security Council should look in the first instance to AU mediator South African President Mbeki for an assessment of the current state of the Ivoirian peace process, rather than convoke a high-level meeting in New York to decide what will happen here after October. However, Alcide Djedje, Cote d'Ivoire's new UN Permanent Representative, told the Ambassador September 1 that although Gbagbo so far is saying he will not go to New York, he is likely to come under heavy pressure from the Secretary General and African leaders to change his mind, and in the end he might do so.

¶3. (C) Alphonse Djedje Mady, Spokesman for the RHDP (Rally of

Houphouetists for Democracy and Peace -- the grouping of the four main political opposition parties), and Secretary General of the PDCI (Democratic Party of Cote d'Ivoire, the party of former President Bedie), confirmed to us August 31 that Bedie will attend the New York meeting. The same day, Sidiki Konate, Director of Cabinet for rebel FN (New Forces) leader Guillaume Soro, confirmed to us that Soro will attend. Amadou Coulibaly, Communications Director for the RDR (Rally of Republicans), the party of former Prime Minister Ouattara, confirmed to us September 1 that Ouattara will also attend the new York meeting.

14. (C) ONUCI Political Director Bayard-Gamatie told us that Prime Minister Banny has also not yet responded to his invitation, presumably waiting for Gbagbo to announce whether he will go. On September 1, Jacqueline Oble, Banny's Principal Advisor, told us she saw no reason why the Prime Minister would not go to the New York meeting, but for the moment he is focusing on the meeting he has called with the four principal Ivoirian leaders in Yamoussoukro September 4.

15. (C) RHDP spokesman Djedje Mady and FN Cabinet Director Konate also confirmed to us that all three principal opposition leaders will attend Banny's September 4 meeting. The opposition leaders had been balking at attending, accusing Banny of having broken commitments made at previous such meetings. Djedje Mady explained to us that this was a reference above all to Banny's decision to bow to President Gbagbo's demand that the procedures for registering undocumented Ivoirians and foreigners be changed. He said that Banny and all four principal leaders, including Gbagbo, had agreed at their July 5 mini-summit with Secretary General Annan that the pilot identification project was a success and that the same procedures would be used to finish the process. Djedje Mady said the opposition leaders had not yet received

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an agenda for the September 4 meeting, but that they intended to demand that Banny explain why he incorporated the complaints of Gbagbo's FPI (Ivoirian Popular Front) party into the revised procedures without consulting the opposition parties or the Cabinet.

16. (C) As for the New York Meeting, Djedje Mady said the opposition parties were still formulating a joint position on what the post-October transition should look like, but that they were all adamantly opposed to any extension of Gbagbo's term. They believe there is no chance of elections or national reconciliation as long as Gbagbo stays in power. Djedje Mady said that the opposition is also very dissatisfied with Prime Minister Banny, because they believe he has not exercised the enhanced powers envisioned by UNSCR 1633 but rather has allowed Gbagbo to keep full powers. However, they do not favor changing the Prime Minister after October because too much time would be lost waiting for a new government to get itself up to full speed. Instead, they hope that with Gbagbo out of the picture, Banny would no longer be afraid to do his job properly.

17. (C) Comment. We do not expect much decision-making to come from either the Yamoussoukro meeting or the New York meeting. The Ivoirians among themselves are extremely unlikely to come up with anything approaching consensus on power sharing after October. Instead they will take their poles-apart positions to New York. Gbagbo, or his representative, will continue to insist that he needs no international mandate to extend his own term in office as is, while the opposition will counter that the international community must remove him immediately. With little appetite evident among the international community at this point to intervene here any more directly than it has already, the New York meeting will likely only take note of the sorry state of the Ivoirian peace process and task ECOWAS and the AU with figuring out what to do about it. This process will probably play itself out pretty much as it did a year ago. At the end of the day, perhaps in early or mid-October, the Security

Council is likely to be asked to endorse essentially a rollover of the current arrangements for another year. This does not bode well for the prospect of getting to elections even by October 2007. End Comment.
Hooks